

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SAIGON 16729 201121Z

44

ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 PM-03 DODE-00 SR-01 ORM-01 AID-10 IO-03

PRS-01 OMB-01 L-02 DRC-01 /072 W

----- 014617

R 200840Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7281

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 16729

LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF VC CB

SUBJ: REPATRIATION OF CAMBODIAN REFUGEES

HEREWITH REPEAT AMCONSUL CAN THO MESSAGE 0719 QUOTE

R 150333Z SEP 73

FM AMCONSUL CAN THO

TO RUMJIR/AMEMBASSY SAIGON 0669

INFO RUMJNO/AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH 0076

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAN THO 0719

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS/ SREF VC CB

SUBJECT: REPATRIATION OF CAMBODIAN REFUGEES

1. FOLLOWING AUGUST TRI-PARTITE MEETING IN PHNOM PENH
WHERE GVN AND GKR REPS APPARENTLY AGREED TO REPATRIATE CAMBODIAN
REFUGEES IN CHAU DOC PROVINCE, A MEETING WAS HELD IN CHAU DOC
ON SEPTEMBER 7 TO EXPLORE METHODS FOR CARRYING OUT THIS
DECISION. ATTENDEES WERE MR. HUOT BUNNA OF CAMBODIAN
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MINISTRY OF SOCIAL WELFARE; DCM OF CAMBODIAN EMBASSY SAIGON

AND PROVINCIAL, REGIONAL AND MSW REPRESENTATIVES TENTATIVE THINKING IS TO MOVE REFUGEES BY ROAD FROM CHAU DOC TO RACH GIA, THEN BY VIETNAMESE NAVY SHIPS TO KOMPONG CHOM.

2. CURRENT REFUGEE COUNT: 1577 MAILIES/8297 PEOPLE IN TWO TINH BIEN DISTRICT CAMPS; PLUS ABOUT 5000 OR 6000 SCATTERED IN TRI TON AND TINH BIEN DISTRICTS. (INCLUSION OF REFUGEES IN HA TIEN DISTRICT OF KIEN GIANG PROVINCE WOULD RAISE THIS NUMBER SUBSTANTIALLY.)

3. ARRO CHAU DOC REPORTS MR DUNNA'S ASSESSMENT OF REFUGEES ATTITUDE RE RETURNING TO CAMBODIA IS THAT ALL BUT SEVERAL FAMILIES WANT TO GO.

4. PROVIDED BOTH GOVERNMENTS AND THE REFUGEES THEMSELVES AGREE WE SEE NO OBJECTIO IN PRINCIPLE TO REPATRIATION. HOWEVER, FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS APPLY:

(A) THERE IS SOME QUESTION IN OUR MIND THAT ALMOST ALL REFUGEES WOULD BE WILLING TO GO TO KOMPONG CHOM WHICH IS A CONSIDERABLE DISTANCE FROM THEIR HOMES IN THE TAKEO AREA.

(B) MOVEMENT OF THIS S
MBER OF PEOPLE OVER LAND AND WATER
PRESENTS CONSIDERABLE LOGISTICAL PROBLEM WHICH MUST FIRST BE ADEQUATELY PLANNED AND FINANCED AND SUBSEQUENTLY CAREFULLY EXECUTED. MOST CRITICAL POINTS WOULD PROBABLY BE STAGING AT RACH GIA AND RECEPTION AT FINAL DESTINATIONS.

(C) IN MAY 1973 VNHCR REP FOR SE ASIA VISITED CAMBODIAN REFUGEE CAMPS IN CHAU DOC PROVINCE. HIS SOLE INTEREST RE VNHCR ASSISTANCE WAS IN POSSIBLE REPATRIATION. SUGGEST UN HIGH COMMISSIONER MAY BE SOURCE OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT IF THIS PROJECT IS CARRIED OUT. MOREOVER, VNHCR PARTICIPATION IN OTHER ASPECTS COULD BE HELPFUL IN NEUTRALIZING POSSIBLE CRITICISM.

5. REQUEST MISSION INFORM US OF ANY ACTION TAKEN IN SAIGON AND PROVIDE APPROPRIATE GUIDANCE TO US.
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